A PERUVIAN TOWN.

"High Living" in the Line of Altitude Only.

STRANGE SIGHTS, QUEER PEOPLE.

The Loftiest Cathedral in the World, and How It was Reached—A Sacred Island.

PUNO, Peru, August 30, 1890.—[Special correspondence of THE HERALD.]—This easternmost town of Peru is not an attractive place, lying, as it does, more than 12,500 feet above the level of the sea, with no vegetation in its vicinity, a line of barren mountains on one side and storm-swept Lake Titicaca on the other. Yet there is a fascination about it which inclines the traveler to linger, however uncomfortable he may be, and impresses every detail of the surroundings indelibly upon his memory, though many more beautiful of the constantly shifting scenes of his long journey are forgotten. It is essentially an Indian town, fully nine-tenths of its population (about 5,000 all told) being Aymaras and Quichuas. The former tribe is most numerous, but both are well-to-do, after a comfortless fashion of their own, generally owning their own houses and having enough to eat—such as it is. At any rate there are no beggars in Puno, though many Peruvian cities that are apparently richer, are swarming with them.

Though so little can be raised here—wheat not at all, corn never ripening, and bitter potatoes growing no bigger than the end of your thumb—the great lake is an exhaustless storehouse, furnishing plenty of fish and always covered with wild fowl of many species. *Huanchas* (rabbits) abound in the neighboring hills, and vicunas are sometimes found. A good many sheep are raised in the vicinity, but the Indians eat mutton only after it has been frozen and dried. Peas, beans, peppers and other staples of Peruvian diet are all brought up from the coast, as they cannot be cultivated at this chilly altitude. They cannot even be cooked tender at such an elevation until they have first been dried, like the potatoes, and reduced to powder. Such a thing as an egg "hard boiled" cannot possibly be had here. Flour has fallen a good deal in price since the railway now brings it over the mountains, but it is still much too dear to be used by the lower classes. Though

THE NIGHTS ARE ALWAYS COLD,

the thermometer descending from fifteen to twenty degrees after sunset, and sometimes even at the height of the season they miscall "summer," touching the freezing point, there is not a house in the town which contains an arrangement for making a fire, beyond the adobe ranges for cooking purposes. A South American range is merely a mound, or shelf of sun-dried mud, extending across one side of a kitchen, with small places hollowed out at intervals in which the Puno housewife burns llama dung, or the twigs of a mountain shrub called *tola*.

The houses, with their enormously thick walls and few windows, have an inner atmosphere cold and damp as that of a vault in the cemetery. When the sun shines, the people wisely stay out of doors; then, in order to keep warm they go to bed very early and rise very late in the morning. Among the wealthier one-tenth of the community there are many pleasant people, mainly the families of English and German merchants and American employees of the railway and steamship lines. Most of their homes, however unprepossessing outside, are large and commodious, and contain unexpected luxuries. For instance, pianos are universal in the better houses, though these instruments cost ten times as much here as in the United States, having to be imported from the other side of the world and until recently having to be brought up from the sea-coast on muleback. I have been astonished more than once on entering what appeared to be a poor hovel destitute of the commonest comforts, with earth floor, straw roof and wooden shutters in lieu of glass windows, to find inside both a piano and a sewing machine!

At this altitude the dry thin air is as hard on furniture as on human beings, causing wood to crack and curl up as quickly as it shrivels the skin and wrinkles it like a dried fig, making a girl of twenty look as old as her grandmother ought to. Bureaus, tables, etc., are bound to split very soon; chairs lose their rungs and fall apart in no time; drawers cease to fit, and floors and ceiled walls shrink wide apart, leaving unsightly crevices. Billiard balls have to be kept in oil when not in use, and a bar of polished iron may lie out of doors indefinitely without danger of rusting. The washerwoman does not bother herself with clothes lines, nor even does she spread her wet linen out on the grass; she merely wrings the things and tosses them down in a heap, where they speedily dry.

THE PATIOS AND COURT-YARD

of the better cases are paved in elaborate patterns with small black and white stones brought from Titicaca islands; as, for example, a wide circle of jet-black stones surround a large, many-rayed central star made of snowy-white ones, the outer edge of the black circle bordered by a running vine, with leaves and flowers made of white pebbles set into the black ones. The effect is as striking as it is uncommon, and the work is durable enough to out-last a century.

Before the late war with Chili there was a famous college in Peru, where many eminent Peruvians and Bolivians were educated. It is defunct, now that the country has become so poor, and no public institutions are maintained here by the government beyond a couple of schools, the big hospital of San Juan de Dios, and a border garrison. Considering its smallness, the town is exceptionally rich in spacious plazas, and there are no fewer than five handsome fountains—one for every thousand inhabitants. Its cathedral, which is said to be the most elevated building of the kind in the world, is really a magnificent structure, with a particularly handsome front. Begun in the year 1739, it was built entirely by the Indians, at the command of the priesthood, without a cent of pay for their labor or materials. It fronts the main plaza with its stately fountain; on one side of it is the quartel where ragged soldiers are always lounging, and on the other is the street down which runs a stream crossed by many funny little adobe bridges, which serves as a dividing line between the Quichua quarter and that of the Aymaras. Short, coarse grass of a peculiar pale-green color covers the plaza and springs up thickly among the stones of the cathedral steps and its wide platform. Just outside of the main door of the church is a tall wooden cross, bearing about it all the implements and adjuncts of that gloomiest tragedy of history. Perched on top is the cock that crew to repentant Peter; there is a handful of nails and the hammer that drove them; the scourge, the spear, a sponge and pitcher of wormwood. Even the dice with which the Jews raffled off His raiment is there (the latter neatly hung at one side), showing that "double sixes" won.

PUNO OWES ITS ORIGIN

to some fabulously rich silver mines in the vicinity, which were discovered and first operated a little more than two centuries ago. A romantic tale is told of the first-worked lode, the gist of which is about as follows: A young Spaniard, of good family, named Don Jose de Salcedo, fell in love with a beautiful Aymara girl and was loved by her in return. The existence of treasure in those mountains was known to the girl's father and to all the Indians for miles around, but the secret had been so carefully guarded by them that no one of the hated Castilian race had ever suspected it. Jose's sweetheart revealed it to him, and he began to work the vein very cautiously and by night. He found it enormously rich and his sudden change in fortunes attracted the attention of the royal officers. Knowing that he had married an Indian girl, they mistrusted how it was and dogged his footsteps until the truth came out. Then they found a pretext to arrest him on some false charge of treason to the government, and took him to Lima, the seat of the vice regal court and also of the inquisition. After a mock trial and the employment of diabolical tortures to wring from him the statements they demanded, he was sentenced to death, and all his property, including the mine that had never really belonged to him, was given to the government. This meant that the officials themselves meant to transfer his wealth to their own pockets as soon as he had been executed in the public square at Lima they hastened to secure the treasure. But what was their dismay to find all the locality hopelessly flooded with water! Incited by Jose's Indian wife, her tribe had stopped all the secret drains and the consequence was that a small lake covered and still covers the entrance to the mines. To this day the Indians have steadily refused to give any information concerning the direction of the veins or

THE EXTENT OF THE DEPOSIT,

though they doubtless know all about it. These seemingly humble people can keep a secret with the utmost fidelity, being absolutely indifferent to bribes or any other inducement. At the present time it is said that they know the location of rich deposits in various parts of the country, but will give no information concerning them and, poor as they are, will not work the veins themselves, fearing to share the melancholy fate of poor Don Salcedo.

Cold as it is, the markets of Puno are held in the open air, the Quichuas occupying one plaza for the sale of their goods, the Aymaras another. The sales are mostly conducted by women, who sit on the ground in rows, each with her small stock of *chunos*, (frozen potatoes), *charqui*, (dried fish), peppers, pease, beans, etc., piled up in little heaps on a blanket. Each heap has a fixed price, which never varies, whatever the fluctuation of the market. For example, a heap of dried pease which you might hold in two hands, costs ten cents. If the market falls, the heap is enlarged and you get a few peas more; if it rises, you get a smaller heap; but ten cents you must pay every time. Neither have these women the remotest idea of selling their stock in the lump, or at wholesale. Should you ask one of the women what she will take for all the peas on hand, she cannot tell until all the basketful has been sorted out into little piles and their value computed at ten cents per pile.

One day in Puno I was much interested in observing from my window a group of Quichua women, who sat from dawn till dark on the frosty ground of a big, bare plaza, their llamas tethered behind them, waiting for possible customers, but with nothing in the world to sell except some small bunches of barley. Young women and old were dressed exactly alike, in short dresses of dark blue flannel, spun, woven and dyed by themselves; the very full skirts shirred down over the hips, the short jackets of the same material meeting at the bosom, but showing the white chemise beneath, the large sleeves gathered slightly at the wrists and hanging loosely in aesthetic style and large hats of the same blue flannel, elaborately trimmed with red woolen "rick rack" braid.

ALL WERE BARE-FOOTED

but looked perfectly comfortable and, though they did not talk much and seldom smiled, seemed happy and contented. Hour after hour they patiently squatted there, busily spinning wool of brightest hues, using hand-spindles which they twirled rapidly between the palms.

During the day I walked over to interview them—but alas, they could not speak a word of English or Spanish, and your scribe is not versed in Quichua, so conversation languished. But I learned from them one thing, viz.: that feminine instincts are about alike the wide world over, whatever may be their environments. Every one of these unsmiling, strong-featured and industrious women showed as much curiosity and interest in the (to them) peculiar cut of my garments as I had in theirs, and the admiring attention of each was instantly attracted to a bracelet of Mexican coins on my wrist. One offered me all the wool she had spun in exchange for it; another wanted to swap her bran new hat, a third her poncho, and others pointed to their llamas as possible mediums of exchange.

But nobody came to buy their poor little bunches of barley, and still they spun on contentedly. At length as twilight was deepening, an old man strolled over and purchased the entire stock on the plaza, for which he paid precisely 57 cents. I saw the money counted out and divided, and then five women hoisted the bundles on their heads and bore them away to the corral of the purchaser.

A group of Indians in front of the house was repairing a bit of broken pavement; and though the workmen numbered half a dozen and the piece to be mended was scarcely two yards square, it took all day to do it. First they sat down on the ground and hallowed out the space with short-handled wooden shovels which looked much like butter ladles, collecting the dirt in their blanket aprons. This they leisurely carried away somewhere, returning after a while, their aprons filled with small stones. Then they sat on the ground again and carefully laid the stones in place, removing them many times to make them all fit snugly, and at last pounded each one down with another stone of the same size. They have no use here for hammers or mallets or wheelbarrows.

One day when acclimatization had somewhat abated

THE TERRORS OF SIRROCHE

I made a pilgrimage through the town to an antique arch on a hill-top, which had commanded my admiration from a distance. The most crowded street of Puno leads thereto, up a sharp decline, lined on either side with adobe cottages, whose inmates flocked to their doors in amazement. It takes a good deal to arouse especial interest in these constitutionally sleepy people, but the rare spectacle of a woman walking abroad and alone without the customary *manta* enveloping her head, will do more in that direction than an earthquake could, being a less common occurrence.

By dint of considerable effort and stooping often to recover breath, though the little hill would hardly be minded were it not for the altitude of Puno, the goal was finally reached. How I wish I could make you see that quaintly peaceful scene as it lay spread out in the August sunshine! The very tall old arch, built of painted and plastered adobe over the highway leading to Lima, serves the triple purpose of a gate to mark the incorporate limit of Puno, a monument to some local heroes, who fell in the war for independence, and to advertise the patriotism of the Jefe Politico under whose administration it was erected. An inscription near the top says it was built in the year 1847, in honor of the heroes aforesaid, whose names are inscribed together with the battles in which they figured. On either side of the road an adobe wall bulges out in semi-circular form, with a seat, or high step, all around its outer edge. Above this, on both sides, is a very wide terrace, also half-moon shaped, backed by a higher wall, with two rows of seats, one above the other. The crescent-shaped terrace was originally paved with small stones, but grass has sprung up thickly between them, and even found root in the dust of years collected on the adobe seats and walls. Built into the center of the outer wall, one one side is a slab to the memory of the good Jefe Politico.

WHO FLOURISHED NEARLY FIFTY YEARS AGO;

and in the opposite wall is a queer old fountain, with water running into its adobe basin from some unknown source.

Presently a boy came along, leading a donkey to the fountain trough. The little beast scrambled up over the high seats as if accustomed to it and drank thirstily, while the urchin rested himself by lying flat on his stomach and kicking up his bare brown heels. A young chola, with a baby in his arms and another olive branch tagging at her heels, sat down near me. The older child, whom she called Guillermo (Spanish for William), in common with all Peruvian small boys, carried a sling with which he continually shied pebbles at birds, beasts, passing pedestrians, or whatever chanced to attract his attention, generally hitting the mark amazingly well. Nobody paid the slightest attention to him, however, and endured the pelting quite as a matter of course. I tried to talk with the mother, who seemed to be inclined to be communicative; but as her vocabulary was an odd mixture of Indian and Castilian, I was unable to get much information except such as smiles, shrugs and gestures could convey.

Indians were constantly coming and going—silent, picturesque figures, hurrying along bare-footed behind their troops of llamas, the latter shy and voiceless as themselves. There is never any stir or sound of labor here as in other countries, though busy Indians are everywhere, gliding noiselessly on their errands, like the stars, "unhasting yet unresting." Close by the fountain another road branches off, an ancient Inca thoroughfare, as shown by the carefully stoned terraces or steps leading up the hillside. Along the highway to Lima

STRANGE LANDMARKS ARE VISIBLE

at intervals in the distance, each—half cairn, half shrine—built so long ago that by whom or for what purpose nobody now living can tell us. To this day the modern Indians decorate them with garlands of flowers on the recurrence of an annual *festa*, with some superstitious notion of pleasing the spirits of their departed ancestors.

In the outskirts of Puno there is a modern monument not unlike those of the ancients in outward appearance, but with different history. A number of years ago some rascal stole the crucifixes, candlesticks and other ornaments of the cathedral, intending to enrich himself by melting them up into one solid lump of silver. But to his infinite disgust they would not melt at all, being largely composed of alloy. To get rid of the worthless things he buried them in the vacant field where they were afterwards found; and by order of the priests a shrine was built over the spot, so that the sacrilege to the church property might be atoned for by the prayers of the faithful and money deposited with which to buy new candlesticks.

This mid-summer time at home is the mid-winter season of Peru and though far within the tropic of Capricorn the nights and mornings at this altitude are very chilly. But between 10 a. m. and 4 o'clock p. m. the weather is perfection. Wrapped in shawls we sit on the veranda, taking care to keep in the well sun, though that luminary burns and tans one here as seldom elsewhere. There is a barley field in front and for the last week a lazy Cholo has been pretending to cut it, with a short scythe that looks like an exaggerated table-knife, working perhaps five minutes at a time and then requiring half an hour's rest. Dragon-flies are buzzing about and birds in the barley field are singing short half-notes, as if they too were subject to the prevailing sirroche. In the distance lies Lake Titicaca, with its small amount of shipping and sacred island and ruined temples. To us the most sacred island of all is that rocky eminence nearest to shore, surrounded by the bluest of blue water, on whose top poor Orton and his companions await the resurrection morning.

FANNIE B. WARD.

LITERATURE.

"The "World's Desire," by Andrew Lang and H. Rider Haggard, will be published in London this month.

Prof. A. S. Hardy has returned from Japan, where he went to collect material for a biography of Joseph Neesima, founder of Neesima college.

The London *Athenæum* says that Marie Corelli will be ready immediately with "a new novel on a subject never before treated in fiction."

William Morris and F. S. Ellis are editing, and Bernard Quaritch will publish an exact reprint of "The Golden Legend," as set forth by Caxton.

"An Introduction to the Study of Mammals" is the title of an important new work upon which Prof. Flower and Mr. J. Lydekker, two well known English biologists, are engaged.

The late Miss Alice Havers (Mrs. Morgan) was, it seems, the artist who designed the very successful large illustrations for Mrs. Burnett's "Little Saint Elizabeth." They were put forth at the time anonymously.

The proposal of the Rev. Stopford A. Brooke to purchase Dove cottage as a memorial to Wordsworth, has met with gratifying success. Of the total sum of £1,000 required, about six hundred and sixty pounds has already been subscribed.

Certain American and English friends and admirers of Theodore Parker have raised a fund for placing a more suitable memorial over his grave at Florence. W. W. Story has designed the memorial, which includes a portrait bust.

French papers report a curious literary "find" in an out-of-the-way departmental library. It is a "Professis of the Abbe Prevost," who was alternately priest and soldier, and the author of the famous novel "Manon Lescaut."

Marshal MacMahon has now completed his memoirs, on which he has been engaged almost ever since his resignation of the presidency of the republic, in 1879. The marshal relates the whole history of the attempted fusion between the Orleanists and the Legitimists, and has even committed to print some curious revelations about the period of French history which succeeded the downfall of the empire. Unfortunately, the author of these interesting memoirs adheres to his original resolution of not publishing them for general information. The edition will be very limited.

The *Jenness Miller Magazine* for October, which has just been issued, is perhaps the most interesting number of that publication offered the public. It comes with an increased number of pages and many really bright articles touching congenial topics, trenchantly written and elaborately illustrated. The features treating of common sense, healthful and artistic dress and physical culture, are by competent authorities, and will appeal to the reason of every woman who can or does appreciate the admirable points of the Jenness Miller system. As a whole, it is a number that every woman should read. Address the Jenness Miller publishing Co., 333 Fifth avenue, New York.

It is reported that the young Grand Duke Nicholas Alexandrovitch, the Czarowitch of Russia, will probably visit this country some time within the coming year. This event will be of special interest from the fact that no other heir to the Russian throne has ever travelled beyond the limits of the European continent. *Harper's Young People* for October 7th contains a portrait of the Czarowitch, together with an interesting sketch of some "Russian Grand Dukes," written by Barnet Phillips.